

12/12/68

To: Louis Ivon and James Alcock
From: Harold Weisberg
Subject: Brian Ampolsk

I have given you copies of the FBI report on Brian Ampolsk, who saw and had an intimate conversation with Oswald several days before the Canal - Street arrest. This report was not published by the Warren Commission, was not followed further by the FBI, and does reflect an unusual intimacy. When the FBI was allegedly looking for Oswald* associate, there is no indication Ampolsk was questioned about this or whether or not he volunteered this. I believe that if Oswald told Ampolsk such things as the time of his father's death, it is probable he told him other things of pertinence.

Yesterday I phoned him. There is ^{no} phone listed in his name, ~~that~~ of his father is 887-9663 (1418 Haring Rd., Metairie). I spoke to someone I take to be a brother and learned that Brian is now in Baton Rouge, working for the State. His phone there is 334-8792.

Last night I received a phone call from a man identifying himself as Brian's father. He said the son was coming out of a long illness, apparently mental, and the father would prefer the entire thing be forgotten. He says he is worried about his son's health. If I were a public official, like the FBI, he said, that would be okay. But because I am a writer he does not want me to speak to his son.

I told him that although there is no official connection, I have been working with Garrison's office. I suggested that particularly if there were a question of his son's health, an informal interview might be desirable, more to Brian's interest. Ampolsk said this was a poor way of doing things. I suggested perhaps he had not thought this through. I told him that others preferred an informal approach when it was possible.

I also suggested that Brian might have disclosed some of what he knows to those close to him, like the family. His blunt and very fast negative response convinces me Brian ~~did~~ ^{did not} Ampolsk gave me to understand that the illness is due to the effect of the assassination on Brian. This also suggests to me that Brian does have knowledge, that the FBI filed a report to keep itself in the clear yet said nothing, to hide him and his knowledge. It simply is not credible that Brian was so affected by the assassination he went into a five-year mental illness and yet had no pertinent knowledge.

The father said that if I, as I said I would, informed your office of our conversation, he would then consult Brian's psychiatrist. He did not say doctor; he did say psychiatrist. He again said any talk would not be in his son's interest, forgetting he had already approved had I been FBI. It is therefore obvious other considerations than his son's health influence the father.

I asked him consider that a major crime had been committed, that it was being properly investigated by the only public official with the legal

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responsibility for conducting such an investigation, and he had already approved the interview by an official. He then, abruptly, said he was very busy, rather unusual at night and with his son's health allegedly so heavy on his mind, and the conversation ended when I said good night.

Interestingly enough, Ampolsk never once suggested that his son had no knowledge that was pertinent. His attitude boils down to this; an interview of his son by federal authority would not in any way endanger his son's health, but one by the Orleans Parish District Attorney's Office would. This is palpably nonsense and tends to destroy the credibility of his appeal. I did assure him that I would not approach his son, and I have not.

I think the father's bluff could be called by asking him to release the psychiatrist from his obligation to hold what the son told him secret. I cannot believe that the assassination had so serious an effect on the young man and his psychiatrist not having to explore it in depth. If the father is unwilling to do this, it would seem to me there would not be a proper invocation of his son's health as a block to his questioning.

It is also likely that the psychiatrist may have the most elaborate records of what the patient told him. Is this not more likely if the illness were of the duration claimed by the father?

Amphibole - coming out of
long illness, apparently
mental, and father
would prefer that the more
things be worked for his
health. If I were a public
figure, like RB, he would
be glad. David I was working
with G. although with no
official connection, I suggested
this kind of interview might
therefore be more to Brian's
interest. He said that this
was a fair way of doing
things & I said perhaps he

2/ Had no thought at the time,
that if ~~anyone~~ ~~of the~~ ~~to~~
~~him~~ ~~there~~ ~~might~~ ~~be~~
an affair of speaking to him
might do him more.
I suggested that perhaps
Brian may have discussed
that he knows with some
of the family who might
know that. His own
statement that he has
no very part in
knowing it is incredible.
It is just impossible.

3) The important of what the father
said is that his son must
all was was perceptuated by
what he knew. He did say
that the assassination did
have a deep traumatic
effect on Bin Laden. He was
ever willing to one word
repeat this conversation
to the office. When he again
pretended any talk was not in
his son's interest (completely
forgetting he had said it
would be perfectly okay if I
were the FBI, I asked him

4) to consider that a major
crime had been committed
it was being investigated officially,
by proper authorities. His
attitude led down to it
it is the FBI day; Garrison
is being not 'Fild and the
govt. This to me, makes his
not in official decision & prep
not heart in what his me
knows. He never once
suggested his me knew
nothing of what was
wrong. This, too, points

5) let the man be a fatherly
important man, let me
know the father suggested
he would speak to the man,
my daughter.

I am understanding a fatherly
person who would be the mother
figure of a man, of his desire to
avoid what might be beyond
the man, but I find to see
where the FBI is not beyond
the person is.